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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Identical letters dated 28 February 1997 from the Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to express the Committee's deep concern at Israel's decision to build a new Jewish settlement in the Jabal Abu Ghneim area, south of East Jerusalem. The Committee strongly deplores this decision, which is in contravention of international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention and numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

The Committee reaffirms that, in accordance with Security Council resolution 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and other resolutions, all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure or status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any part thereof, have no legal validity and must be rescinded. The Council also called upon all States not to provide Israel with any assistance to be used specifically in connection with settlements in the occupied territories.

The Committee considers that the growing expansion and consolidation of settlements create facts on the ground inconsistent with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, which the current peace process seeks to implement. They seriously undermine the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and jeopardize the much-needed process of confidence-building between the parties.

Noting the similar concerns expressed by many Member States, the Committee wishes to join them in appealing to the Government of Israel to refrain from measures detrimental to the continuation of the peace process. It also appeals

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to all concerned to exert their influence on the Government of Israel not to carry out this ill-advised decision. In this spirit, the Committee fully supports the request made by the Group of Arab States for an immediate meeting of the Security Council in order to consider the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ravan FARHÂDI
Acting Chairman
Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People